



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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SACHI A. HAMAI  
Interim Chief Executive Officer

March 13, 2015

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To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Sachi A. Hamai  
Interim Chief Executive Officer

**MOTION TO DIRECT THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO WORK WITH OUR SACRAMENTO ADVOCATES TO SUPPORT OR PURSUE LEGISLATION TO CLARIFY EXISTING LAW FOR STATE SUBSIDIZED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES; AND SEND A FIVE-SIGNATURE LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR WITH COPIES TO THE COUNTY'S LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION IN SUPPORT OF SUCH CLARIFYING LEGISLATION (ITEM NO. 9, AGENDA OF MARCH 17, 2015)**

Item No. 9 on the March 17, 2015 Agenda is a motion by Supervisors Kuehl and Ridley-Thomas to direct the Interim Chief Executive Officer to:

- 1) Work with our Sacramento advocates to support or pursue legislation to clarify existing law for State subsidized child development services, and
- 2) Send a five-signature letter to Governor Brown with copies to the County's Legislative Delegation, in support of such clarifying legislation. State law prioritizes neglected or abused children who are recipients of child protective services, or children who are at risk of being neglected or abused, and as such, clarification is needed to explicitly include foster children and children with parents who are under the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) supervision.

## **Background**

Under current law, priority enrollment is provided in State and Federal Subsidized Child Care and Development Services that serve children from birth to twelve years of age and older children with exceptional needs, including first priority for enrollment for

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abused or neglected children who are receiving Child Protective Services (CPS) or are at risk of being abused or neglected. Second priority for enrollment is provided to income eligible families, regardless of the number of parents in the home. Within this priority, families with the lowest gross monthly income relative to family size are admitted first.

According to an April 25, 2013 report from the Advancement Project, "Early Care and Education Access for Maltreated Children in LA County," based on a child welfare understanding of current California law, children receiving protective services and children at risk of abuse/neglect describes all children under DCFS supervision. Therefore, these children should be categorically eligible and prioritized for child care and development services. However, early care and education providers' understanding of the policy is that only children who are classified as imminently at risk of abuse/neglect are eligible to receive priority enrollment for subsidized child care and development services.

According to the Advancement Project, this is due to vague, confusing identification and enrollment regulations. The report further indicates that children under child welfare supervision could potentially lose their eligibility in subsidized child care when they are formally placed into foster care, despite the fact that they are still receiving protective services at that point and are safe from imminent danger or neglect.

### **County Impact**

The Department of Children and Family Services indicates there is a need to expand early education and child care to the parents and caregivers of DCFS-supervised children. As noted in the motion, there is a significant need to provide access to child care for those at-risk children whose young parents are under DCFS supervision (pregnant and parenting teens) and who are aging out of foster care, including 282 young children whose parents are currently under DCFS supervision.

According to the Chief Executive Office - Office of Child Care, access to consistent and high quality early care and education services can mitigate the negative impacts of abuse and neglect on young children. Furthermore, these programs can also provide teen parents with the support and information they need to be effective parents.

In addition, on March 11, 2015, the County of Los Angeles Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development approved a recommendation to support facilitating access and provide priority for subsidized child care services for children in foster care, which is consistent with the Roundtable's Child Care and Development Policy Framework.

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### **Conclusion**

Support of this motion is consistent with existing Board-approved policy to support efforts to ensure that vulnerable children and their families have access to consistent, uninterrupted subsidized early care and education services; and to support efforts to enhance the quality of early care and education that set high standards for all services and program types and address the needs of all children and their families.

**Therefore, this office recommends approval of the motion to support or pursue State Legislation to clarify existing law to explicitly include foster children and children with parents under DCFS supervision for subsidized child care development services, and to send a five-signature letter in support of such legislation to the Governor with copies to the County's Legislative Delegation, requesting their approval of such legislation.**

We will continue to keep you advised.

SAH:JJ:MR  
OR:ma

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel